GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EARTH SCIENCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1097
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2016
Species in Sea
Solanki Dr. Kirit Premjibhai

Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of endangered species in Indian sea/waters;

(b) the number of endangered species including Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin and whale found dead at various sea shore including Mumbai, species-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to rescue those species?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
(SHRI Y. S. CHOWDARY)

(a) A series of notifications has been issued under the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, to safeguard nature and endangered species. As a part of this endeavour, so far 690 areas have been declared protected areas in India including declaration of eighteen biosphere reserves for protection of the entire ecosystems. So far 885 species of marine fauna belonging to 6 phyla (Porifera, Coelenterata, Arthropoda, Mollusca, Echinodermata, fishes, reptiles and mammals) are afforded adequate protection under different categories (Schedules I, II, III, IV) as their natural populations are being depleted fast. The details are given in Table below.

Faunal group	No. of species	Schedule of IWPLA, 1972
Porifera		
Calcareous sponges (all species)	10	Schedule III
Coelenterata		
Reef-building corals (all scleractinians)	519	Schedule I
Black corals (all antipatharians)	8	Schedule I
Organ Pipe Coral (Tubiporamusica)	1	Schedule I
Fire corals (all Millepora species)	5	Schedule I
Sea fans (all gorgonians)	86	Schedule I
Arthropoda		
Robber Crab	1	Schedule I
Horseshoe crabs (Merostomata)	2	Schedule IV
Mollusca		
Gastropoda	20	Schedule I, IV
Bivalvia	4	Schedule I, IV
Echinodermata		
Sea cucumber (all Holothuria)	163	Schedule I
Fishes		
Elasmobranchs (sharks and rays)	10	Schedule I
Sea horses (all syngnathidians)	23	Schedule I
Giant Grouper	1	Schedule I
Reptiles		
Marine turtles	5	Schedule I
Saltwater Crocodile	1	Schedule I
Mammals	26	Schedules I, II
TOTAL	885	

With regards to flora, there are no endangered plant species in Indian Sea water, though two seaweed (Algae) species namely 1. Gelidiella aerosa (Forssk.) J. Feldman - Gelidiellacebae and 2. Gracilaria edulis (S.Gmel) P.C. Silva - Gracilariaceae, growing along the Tamil Nadu coast (near Mandapam) which are being exploited for Agar Agar preparation

(b) There are at least 120 species of marine mammal found in the world, and a fourth of these may be found in India and adjacent countries. The marine mammals, a diverse group are primarily ocean-dwelling or depend on the ocean for food. They include the cetaceans (whales, dolphins, and porpoises), the sirenians (manatees and dugong), the pinnipeds (true seals, eared seals and walrus), several otters (the sea otter and marine otter) and the polar bear. There are often vulnerable or endangered due to a history of commercial exploitation for blubber, meat. A list of species are annexed.

(c) Step taken by the Government to intensify wildlife conservation efforts are as follows:
â€¢ Hunting and commercial exploitation of wild animals included in various schedules of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 is prohibited. Offences committed in respect of these species attract punishment prescribed under the Act.
â€¢ The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to strengthen the enforcement of law for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.
â€¢ Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and covering important wildlife habitats have been created all over the country under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats.
â€¢ Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of "Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats", "Project Tiger" and "Project Elephant" for providing better protection to wildlife and improvement of its habitat.
â€¢ The State/Union Territory Government have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around the Protected Areas.